

Spencer Fox Takes the First Step

Cornea Transplants Start at Olpin's



"Approaching the family at a time when they are emotionally upset is the hardest thing to do."

HEBER CITY—"The hardest part is the asking for the donation from the family," said Spencer Fox.

Spencer Fox is one of several morticians who have taken a special class in the enucleation of corneas for the purpose of providing transplants to waiting cornea patients.

All the funeral homes were notified by the Lions eye bank of Salt Lake about a program that was being started to obtain corneas for transplant patients. The Lions Club is dedicated to the preservation of sight, having received a charge from Helen Keller.

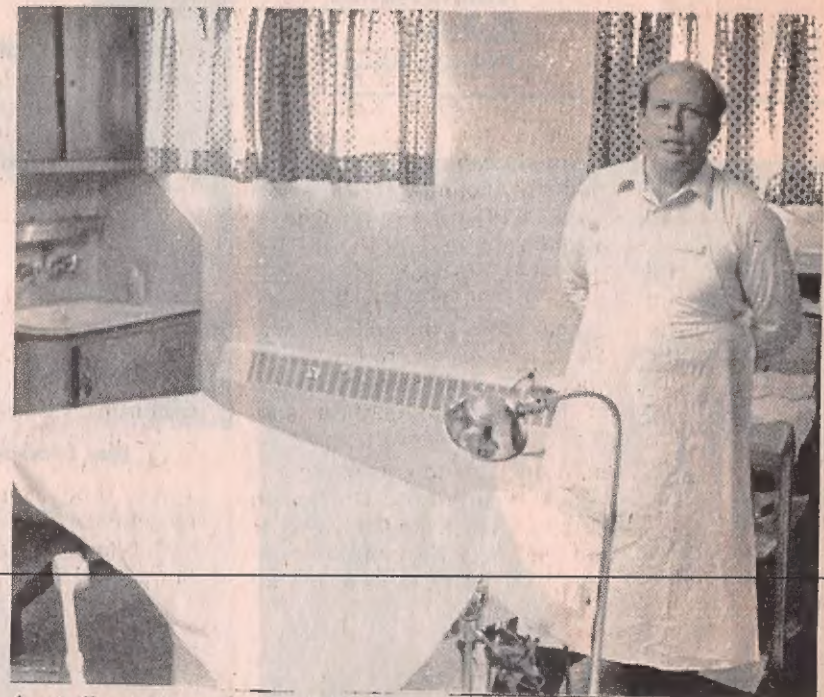
"They tried to get us involved to increase the amount of donors," said Fox. The enucleation of the eye can take place up to 6 hours after the person dies, depending on conditions. For this reason, it was decided that the mortuaries throughout the state would be a good place to

and permission hadn't been obtained at the time of death, so they contacted Fox, and arranged for him to do the enucleation, and arranged for transportation of the extracted eye.

"Before any enucleation, there's a questionnaire that has to be filled out, even before the eyes are used," explained Fox. "As long as they're donated, and the cause of illness, and age looks like a potential donor, they go through the procedure, then they go through a process of acceptance at the lab."

Being shipped from the mortuary the eyes are placed in a special container of fluid, to preserve the natural fluids, and are placed in ice to keep the eyes cold from dehydrating.

"The thing about a cornea is-it doesn't matter if the person has poor vision, whether they wear eye glasses, or have 20/20 vision or the age," stated Fox. "The



A sterile environment is important to the enucleation. Spencer Fox had to attend classes to learn the exact, intricate moves to removing an eye for cornea transplanting.



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obtain more donors. The Lions Bank presented a seminar with qualified instructors, who taught not only the extraction of the cornea, but gave indepth study on the eye and its functions. Fox signed up, filling out an application and was received instruction from the faculty.

The instruments to perform the operation are donated by the Lions Bank through a special fund. The hospital donates the sterilaxation of the equipment everytime the operation is performed, so the cost is minimal to Fox.

On one particular occassion, Fox received a call on Christmas Eve, from a medical examiner in Salt Lake who had had a patient die. The body had been transferred to Olpin's Mortuary,

density of the cells is what makes whether it's a good cornea."

There are 10 different areas that can affect the cornea transplant. Most of the diseases that will not allow for a transplant are the transmittive diseases, others are affected by eye disorders or diseases.

Those people who can receive help from eye donations are people with Keratoconus, Corneal Swelling or Edema, Corneal Dystorphies, Herpes Simples, Herpes Zoster, Chemical Burns and Scars.

"Approaching the family at the time when they are emotionally upset over the death," said Fox, "is the hardest thing to do."

"And to find the nerve inside to ask them, not knowing their reaction, have they considered



"The joy of knowing some one else will see."

organ donation."

"If we don't ask them, we're making a decision for them that they don't want the donation made. So we're not giving them a chance to say no, which is a right answer, depending on their feeling."

"There have been circumstances where people have been upset because no one has ever asked," said Fox.

Fox explained that many people feel an emptiness inside with the passing of a loved one, and the assurance of there being something good coming about from their death is comforting.

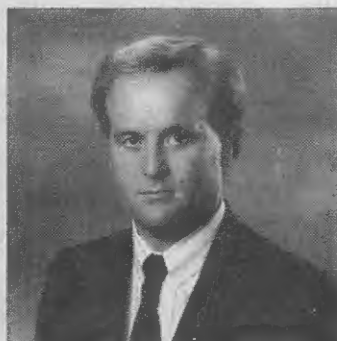
Fox received a letter some time later from the Lions Eye Bank stating that the extractions that he made were used, so that someone could see.

Photos by Terry Mair

TO OUR FRIENDS IN THE COMMUNITY



Elwood Sundberg



Kelly Sundberg



Dan Snyder



Spencer Fox

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WE SHARE YOUR CONCERNS

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WE SHARE YOUR FAITH

We understand the importance of maintaining the sacred principles and rituals of our LDS faith. Our role is to carry out the wishes of the survivors and clergy with tact, dignity and respect.

WE SHARE YOUR COMMUNITY

Orem is our home and has been for generations. We make every effort to contribute to our community in whatever ways we can. Kelly, Spencer, and the members of the staff actively support and are involved in serving grief support groups, hospice organizations, schools and churches, LDS and other fraternal, service and social clubs.

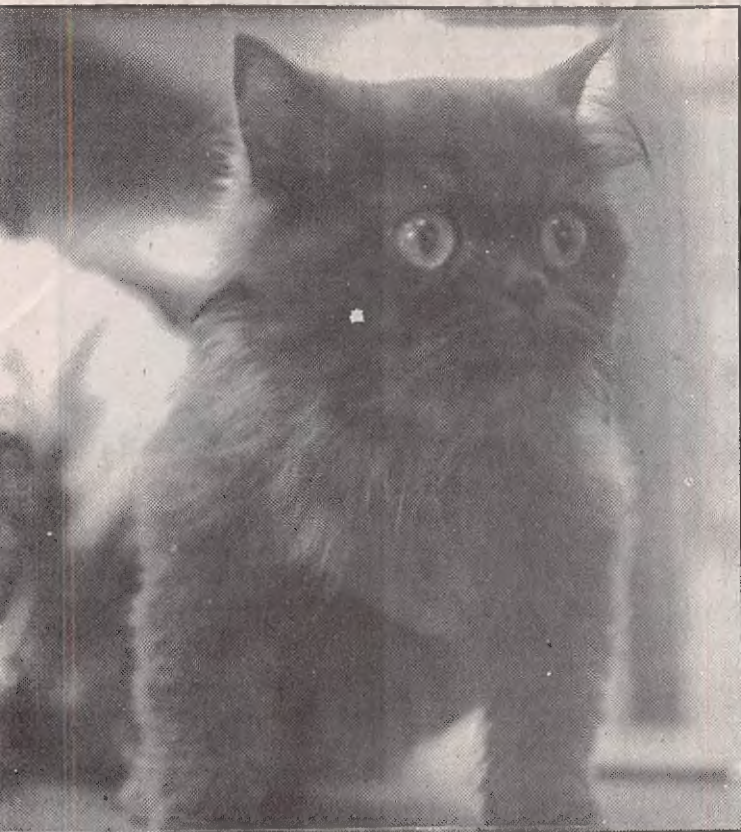
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Herald Photo/Jason Olson

Pet of the Week

This purebred Persian female cat, named "Smokey," is the Pet of the Week. She is 1½-years-old, de-clawed and available for adoption at the Utah County Animal Shelter.

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